

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CCO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 DODE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 NSAE-00 USSS-00 /031 W

----- 115842

O R 160926Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SANAA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2847

INFO USUN NEW YORK 046

AMCONSUL ASMARA

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T SANAA 2018

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: XX, PFOR, YE

SUBJ: MIDDLE EAST SITUATION: CONVERSATION WITH YARG

ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER

REF: (A) STATE 203684; (B) STATE 203889; (C) STATE 203890

1. SUMMARY: ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER ASNAG FEARS US ARMS RESUPPLY TO ISRAEL WILL SHARPLY INCREASE ANTI-AMERICAN EMOTIONS WHICH COULD PRODUCE INCIDENTS. YARG SECURITY COMMITTEE WILL REVIEW CONTINGENCY PLANS. YARG REQUESTS ALL AMERICANS AVOID EXPOSURE AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE. YARG OFFICIALLY REGRETS US DECISION AND REQUESTS THIS VIEW BE CONVEYED. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTS GOVERNMENT EXERCISE CONTROL OVER PRESS, RADIO, AND PUBLIC STATEMENTS TO AVOID FUELING ANTI-AMERICAN SENTIMENT. ACTING FONMIN OBLIGED CANCEL US VISIT.

2. ON NOTICE TOO SHORT TO ALLOW OPPORTUNITY FOR CONSUL-

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TATION WITH DEPT. ACTING FONMIN ASKED TO SEE ME

BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE FOR LONDON OCTOBER 16. ASNAG ASKED FOR MY COMMENTS ON REASONS FOR US DECISION RESUPPLY ISRAEL, A DECISION WHICH HE TERMED UNFAIR, DANGEROUS FOR THE AREA AND DEEPLY REGRETTABLE.

3. DRAWING ON REF (C) I CITED MASSIVE SOVIET AIRLIFT TO ARABS AS CAUSAL FACTOR IN USG DECISION ON RESUPPLY. I ALSO MENTIONED HOWEVER, THAT US HAD ACTED ONLY AFTER VIGOROUS EFFORTS OBTAIN CEASEFIRE HAD COME TO NAUGHT DUE LARGELY TO LACK OF SOVIET COOPERATION. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, USG CLEARLY HAD NO ALTERNATIVE.

4. ON LOCAL SITUATION AND POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES, I NOTED THAT THERE HAD ALREADY BEEN A COUPLE OF CASES OF UNPLEASANTNESS INVOLVING AMERICANS; WE COULD ASSUME THAT PUBLIC AWARENESS OF USG ARMS RESUPPLY TO ISRAEL WOULD EXACERBATE EXISTING EMOTIONALISM, THE MORE SO SINCE THERE PLENTY OF ELEMENTS ANXIOUS EXPLOIT THIS SITUATION TO HARM PRESENT YARG AS WELL AS COURSE OF ITS RELATIONS WITH US. I SAID I HAD NO DOUBT OF SINCERITY OF GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN FOR ITS FELLOW ARAB STATES IN THIS CRITICAL HOUR. I ALSO UNDERSTOOD WHY IT FELT OBLIGED TO TAKE PUBLIC POSITIONS IN SUPPORT OF THESE. AT SAME TIME, I THOUGHT GOVERNMENT MIGHT BE WISE TO EXPRESS ITS SUPPORT IN MOST TEMPERATE TONES POSSIBLE LEST YARG'S OWN PRONOUNCEMENTS HAVE AN EFFECT OF FANNING PUBLIC EMOTION, JEOPARDIZING GOVERNMENT'S ABILITY GET THROUGH DIFFICULT PERIOD AHEAD WITHOUT DISRUPTION OF RELATIONSHIP WITH US TO WHICH IT SAYS IT ATTACHES IMPORTANCE.

5. ASNAG REITERATED THAT USG DECISION ON RESUPPLY A MATTER OF DEEPEST REGRET. IT WOULD PROLONG THE FIGHTING AND THE LOSS OF LIFE ON BOTH SIDES; INCREASE ISRAEL'S RESISTANCE TO REASONABLE COMPROMISE HOWEVER HOSTILITIES ENDED; DEMINISH NOT ENHANCE US ABILITY CONTRIBUTE TO A LASTING PEACE; AND SEVERELY DISRUPT US-ARAB RELATIONS AND US POSITION IN ARAB WORLD AND UNDERMINE THE INTERNAL POSITION OF MODERATE ARAB LEADERS. ASNAG ASKED THAT THESE OFFICIAL VIEWS BE CONVEYED TO USG.

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6. TURNING TO SECURITY PROBLEM LIKELY BE CREATED FOR AMERICAN PRESENCE IN YEMEN BY USG ACTIONS, ASNAG SAID THAT WHILE YEMENI PUBLIC OPINION SOMEWHAT AROUSED THIS HAD NOT SO FAR BEEN TO A DANGEROUS DEGREE. USG RESUPPLY, HOWEVER, COULD CREATE AN ENTIRELY NEW SITUATION UNLESS YARG PLAYED MATTERS VERY CAREFULLY. THERE WERE INDEED ALL TO MANY EXTREMISTS AND OPPONENTS OF PRESENT YARG WHO COULD BE COUNTED UPON TO TRY TO CREATE FRICTION AND

FOMENT DISTURBANCES.

7. ASNAG SAID THAT IN THE FEW HOURS LEFT TO HIM BEFORE LEAVING FOR LONDON HE WOULD CONVENE MEETING OF YARG'S HIGHEST LEVEL SECURITY COMMITTEE TO TAKE AN UPDATED READING ON SECURITY SITUATION AND CONTINGENCY PLANS. HE WOULD ALSO ISSUE INSTRUCTIONS IN ORDER THAT PRESS AND RADIO TREATMENT OF SITUATION BE KEPT AS UNEMOTIONAL AND LOW-KEY AS POSSIBLE IN THE CIRCUMSTANCES. SCHOOL PRINCIPALS WOULD BE INSTRUCTED BE ALERT TO AGITATION AND ADVISED OF GOVERNMENT'S WISH THAT STUDENT POLITICAL ACTIVITY BE AVERTED. IF DANGER POINTS WERE SPOTTED ANYWHERE, GOVERNMENT WOULD PASS THE WORD THAT CONDUCT OF FOREIGN RELATIONS WAS RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT NOT OF INDIVIDUALS OR CROWDS IN THE STREETS. HE SUGGESTED THAT FOR ITS PART EMBASSY INSTRUCT ALL AMERICANS MINIMIZE EXPOSURE. I SAID APPROPRIATE INSTRUCTIONS HAD ALREADY BEEN ISSUED.

8. ACTING FONMIN PROCEEDING LONDON TO PLACE WIFE IN MATERNITY HOSPITAL. IN VIEW OF MIDDLE EAST SITUATION, PRESIDENT HAS INSTRUCTED HIM RETURN IN NOT MORE THAN ONE WEEK. HE WILL NOT THEREFORE BE ABLE CARRY OUT PLANNED US VISIT AT THIS TIME.  
CRAWFORD

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**To:** SECSTATE WASHDC USUN NEW YORK ASMARA AMMAN BEIRUT JIDDA KUWAIT LONDON  
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